

# The Education of the Sentiments

Miranda Matthews

## Abstract

In this chapter I will explore concepts of the sentiments in continental philosophy, as nuanced, creative emotional expressions, and their relation to learning. This study refers to the relevant philosophies of Jean Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Jacques Rancière, Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, Michel Foucault, Alain Badiou, Frantz Fanon, Isabelle Stengers, Baruch Spinoza and Jacques Lacan. The chapter addresses questions of whether there are differences between the sentiments and the emotions, and whether vocalising the sentiments might be a harmonising or revolutionary action. It considers how the sentiments can be activated in learning processes, how choices may be made about which sentiments to express, and reasons why they might need an education. The argument relates the autobiographical to the global, and explores approaches that tend towards pedagogies of compassion. Different philosophical concepts of mind-body and environment are compared, through existentialist, poststructural and posthumanist philosophies. In migrations among the focal thinkers a concept of *travelling sentience* emerges, that gathers layers of significance for an education of the sentiments.

## Introduction

As we begin to challenge preconceptions, and reflect on the significances of sensory and emotional experiences, could we discuss the “sentiments?” How would this discussion be meaningful in contemporary education, and would continental philosophy equip us to navigate the issues that are presented?

It could be observed that the neoliberal marketisation of education, towards narrower, functionalised constructions of the learning subject, is detracting from the education of creative sensibilities. The sentiments are explored in fields that address affective and emotional connections, with self, other and environment. If there is a denial of the sentiments in formal education systems, and reflective connections with emotion, would an education of the sentiments have to happen elsewhere? You might at this stage be responding ‘my sentiments exactly’ to my observation about the marketisation of education, which would perhaps indicate a sense of already having gathered a purchase on your emotions in this context.

In this chapter I will explore concepts of the sentiments, as reflective and nuanced emotional expressions, and their relation to learning via continental philosophy. This study refers to Jean Paul Sartre (2001, 2007, 2014, 2018), Simone de Beauvoir (1998, 2001), Jacques Rancière (2010), Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (2013), Michel Foucault (1980, 2005, 2007), Alain Badiou (2007), Frantz Fanon (1963), Isabelle Stengers (2013), Baruch Spinoza (1988) and Jacques Lacan (1963). I refer particularly to these philosophers, as they have demonstrable continuing relevance for contemporary experiences in education.

The chapter begins with an autobiographical introduction to my reflections on this matter for discussion. I then unpack a response to the question ‘What are the sentiments?’ as this question may be addressed in continental philosophy. In the next section of the chapter I will question why the sentiments could be considered significant for education. Then I discuss historicity and healing time, as these factors are essential for an education of the sentiments. I introduce the concept of *travelling sentience*, as the sentiments change through differences in mind-body-environments, among humans and other-than-humans. My argument applies philosophical concepts as they can be seen to support learning and teaching for compassion, in creative conceptual visualisation, and material experiences.

To say one has a ‘sentimental attachment’ to an issue, a philosophy, a work of culture, even a person, can sometimes be treated as though one is holding on to a nostalgia for a currency that has since passed. The term might be used pejoratively, to denote a collection of memories that are cherished beyond their true contemporary significance, as for example one might hold on to the significance of a theory or an experience as a memento of history. However reflection on the sentiments, arguably has a perennial value in education.

There are not many students at the age of compulsory education that have access to continental philosophy, and during adolescence and early adulthood the emotions can be particularly forceful, also sometimes not life-affirming. So let us say that a situation is experienced by someone not yet empowered in the world, that brings forth an emotion that might have negative effects for the self or for society, if there is not a productive form of expression for such an overpowering feeling. Perhaps the affective force could be channelled towards a different feeling, and reflective ways of processing experiences – could philosophy help with this?

Continental philosophy has travelled much of the world by now; in current posthumanist iterations, European theory is brought into contact with indigenous philosophies, that connect with the subjectivity and sentience of other-than-humans (De la Cadena and Blaser 2018). One could observe that articulations of the sentiments in continental philosophy critically diverge from the iterations of psychological studies (Foucault 1980, Deleuze and Guattari 2013), to focus on terms of reference, beyond sensibility, within and outside being. These approaches differ from the logical positivism of Anglo-American analytic philosophy (Barris 2012). Continental philosophy has arguably created a special place in the world, of feeling, of thought and education.

However there are 'post-continental' voices that seek to gather an ecological, decolonial momentum with significance that does not yearn for a Eurocentric field of thought (Maldonado-Torres, 2010, Pecic 2013). According to Ekin Erkan (2020), post-continental philosophy aims to contradict classic analytic-continental divisions with pluralistic approaches that bridge scientific and ontological concerns (James 2019) including 'robust immanence' (Erkan 2020, 4) in the works of François Laruelle (2016), and Bernard Stiegler's 'economy of expression' (Stiegler 2020 cited in Erkan 2020, 8). Expanded ecologies of practice explored by Isabelle Stengers also connect with the non-binaries of pluralistic post-continentalism (Stengers and Muecke 2017). Stengers' posthuman expansions of the analytic, influenced by Alfred North Whitehead, offers philosophy that is 'a tool for thinking through what is happening' (2013, 185), that however has no neutrality.

Moving from the global to the autobiographical, and an author's relation to experiences of cultural plurality, you will see that I refer often to French philosophy, and indeed I have a particular affinity with the French. This is partly a sentimental attachment, an affective relation. When I was a young child my father moved to Paris, to design cars for Peugeot and Citroen. I was going to move there too, and my parents sent for a prospectus for a school in Paris. It was a very romantic idea to be educated in another country. I started to learn French intently, so that I could adapt to being in a new country. Then my world changed as my parents separated. My brother and I and would fly over to Paris on a nine seater company plane to see my father. There was a lot of emotion felt in these changes, some of which I could not deal with at the time, and have needed to process with hindsight. Many

of us in the UK have felt similar emotions in the 2020 separation of Britain from the European Union, that is known as 'Brexit'.

This connection with the emotions as forces that act upon us, and through us, in response to our worldly situations can arguably be assisted through becoming philosophical. Readers may appreciate how I would have a strong connection to the cultures and histories that have produced what I see as the poetic, sensory and aesthetic, crystalline yet energised concepts of continental philosophy. French philosophy often relates with the arts and creative literature, so one could say that it draws more widely on stimuli for the senses that provoke a range of affective and reflective responses. Accessing these creative exchanges as creative 'acts of substitution' between one emotive sentiment and another (Sartre 2014, 24), can enable the expression and entertainment of emotion that, to some extent though not completely, could assist an education of the sentiments.

Initially then, my interests and sentiments were drawn by personal experiences. Readings of Emile Zola accompanied the joys and traumas of adolescence – as in the gritty historicised accounts of 'Earth' (2014). Then, experiencing the social construction of educational environments, I began to read poststructural philosophy in the early 1990s starting with Baudrillard's post-structural *Cool Memories* (1990). Later I moved to comparative existentialist and poststructural philosophies of freedom and negotiated autonomy in the works of Sartre and Foucault for my doctoral studies (Matthews 2018 a, b, c, 2021a).

Some of the texts that were central to this applied philosophy were Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*, for its fascinating investigations of freedom, being and negation (referenced in this chapter in the 2018 edition); *Existentialism is a Humanism* (2007) – for argumentation of the positive aspects of existentialism relating to agency in learning, and the *Roads of Freedom* series – particularly *The Age of Reason* (2001) and *The Last Chance* (2009), for narratives of relational freedom among learning subjectivities. Among Foucault's works, again without listing all, *The Politics of Truth* (2007b), *Power/Knowledge* (1980), *The Hermeneutics of the Subject* (2005) and *Foucault Live* (ed. Lotringer 1996), informed my comparative studies of how multiple forms of agency – as technologies of the self - are negotiated amidst the machinic, social constructions of schools and universities.

After that in-depth application of two different philosophies in art education, towards supporting creative agency for students, practitioners and policy making, my vistas began to open even further as I read and researched. Emancipatory pedagogies informed by Rancière (1991, 2010, 2016, eds. Rockhill and Watts 2009) formed bridges between existentialist discourses and the current concerns of students, artists and arts educators who seek to disrupt the normative patterns of the sensible (Matthews 2021). In addition, continuing research with artist teachers and their professionalised responses to policy in practice, has gathered theoretical sustenance from Beauvoir's *Ethics of Ambiguity* (Beauvoir 2015, Krus 2012, Matthews 2019).

Currently I lead the Centre for Arts and Learning (CAL) at Goldsmiths, University of London, UK; in our projects and events we draw extensively upon continental philosophy, particularly as it relates to practice research in education. For instance, Deleuze and Guattari (2013) informed research programmes that developed around the CAL themes of *Discomfort Zones* (2019-20, see Matthews 2020) and *Affective Digital Presence* (see Matthews 2021c, Gilbert and Matthews 2021). Guattari's *The Three Ecologies* (2008) also became a central text for CAL *Ecologies in Practice* (2021- ): CAL has researched ways of making Earth focused responses in the environment, in social relations, human and other-than-human subjectivity via arts practice research. There you have a very brief introduction to some of the affective histories and contemporary practices that inform this chapter.

Perhaps you have developed an affective connection with the author in my sharing of this information? Perhaps there is frustration and anger that I am not already distancing from the autobiographical in grappling with concepts of sentiment and emotion? These would be different affective responses that could be voiced and argued. This, I think, is a central point, in that an education of the sentiments would need to anticipate different affective responses to matters raised.

It is worth noting here that continental philosophy, via Foucault (ed. Rabinow 1991), Sartre (2014), Deleuze and Guattari (2013) among others, has sought to question and in some cases rebuke the organised psychologies of capitalist societies. These philosophers have supported paradigm shifts to the relations between the mind, body and senses, in ways that still enable us to see ourselves as more than a sum of contributory parts, social actions and

disfunctions. It diverts our attention from the potential immobility of present experiences to zones of 'possibility'. We are therefore offered alternative ways of thinking and feeling about our contingent situations (Sartre 2018, Rancière 1991, 2016, Matthews 2018c, 2021).

When reading philosophical texts, the mind can be filled with acrobatic thinking. I am thinking and feeling something other than I would have thought and felt, had I not read that text, or taken part in those particular arguments. Philosophy could be viewed therefore, as enabling the experience of alternative structures for thought. It speaks to feeling and self in the world. At times the contemplation of philosophical material to reflect on in relation to the sentiments, may frustrate and baffle, but in that very moment of trying to unpack the significance of this material, and in the initial experiences of strangeness in encountering different ways of thinking (Rancière 1991), one is seeking understandings, and exploring the feeling of unknowing.

What are the sentiments?

Let us now go back to questioning the sentiments in education, as understandings of their significance for learning, and possibilities for illuminating and changing the sentiments may be informed by continental philosophy. What are the sentiments and how do we separate and identify them? In part we identify a feeling by naming it, by ascribing it a social and personal value, and a potential action. When very young children first experience emotions, their expression can be found often in different forms of cry, or non-verbal expression. As we grow, so do our interests and capacities for nuancing our feelings in various forms of sensory expression, and recognising how we respond particularly to different experiences. This is not the case however when emotions, and the more nuanced sentiments are coerced into particular patterns, as in militaristic, authoritarian or neglectful experiences. It is important to recognise that emotional expression is not just verbal; the emotions are explored and communicated by all the senses, as in artforms that enable others to, temporarily, connect with other emotions.

At times however, there might be no readily identifiable functional, or empirical basis for the experience of an emotion, and this is where continental philosophy has taken up the

‘magical’ (Sartre 2014, Howells 2009) the eventful ‘nuances’ in emotions (Badiou 2007, 333), or the entanglements of a ‘machinic assemblage’ of internal sensations and external stimuli (Deleuze and Guattari 2013, Gilbert and Matthews 2021).

Spinozan philosophy talks of joy as a productive and activating force that acts through us, in evolving mind-body experience, in that ‘we do not know what a body is capable of, or what a mind is capable of thinking’ (Atkinson 2018, 2). According to Spinoza, ‘We strive to imagine, as far as we can, what we imagine will lead to joy’ (Spinoza 1988, 510). Existential philosophy can be suspicious of joy in some respects, as joy could dupe us into believing controlling external forces, or transport and divert human beings from being active in the world, via a promise of something that is immanent but never attainable (Sartre 2014, 46-47). According to Sartre there are four main emotions: anger, fear, sadness and joy, with nuanced emotions in-between these feelings. If these are the main emotions, then sentiments such as love might be seen as drawing together different facets of them, in what Badiou terms the ‘infinite nuances of the sentiment of love’ (Badiou 2007, 333). This nuanced sentiment alters again in terms of whether this feeling is for an adult in a platonic sense, a romantic love, a love of a child or of something other-than-human, in our material and non-material environments.

Anger may be active, sadness and fear passive in ways that can be liberating. At other times these emotions are not life-affirming. Sartre gives the example of a fearful reaction leading to a physiological ‘escape’ response of collapse and inertia, when faced by a ‘ferocious beast’ (2014, 42). Emotions in this sense are sometimes fight or flight – leaning more frequently to an escape, and less to vocalised sentiments. Deleuze and Guattari move away from a human centred perspective, when discussing the instinctive, animal reaction to danger to extend the view of emotive subjectivity to the other than human: ‘the animal is more a fleer than a fighter, but its flights are also conquests, creations’ (2013, 63). Usually there is more fear of humans among other-than-humans than we have of them, and that is a point that sometimes requires a little education.

Sometimes the magical, creative flight is preferable to staying with the trouble. Then again the flight could enable us to transform that trouble in the world, through a passionate attachment to the need for change: ‘emotion is not always an escape’ (Sartre 2014, 30).

Sartre prefers to focus on anger, as the feeling that identifies a need for transformation in the world (39); though a Spinozan view would prefer to focus on joy as the transformative emotion.

Christina Howells works from the original French of texts such as *Being and Nothingness* – most recently translated by Sarah Richmond (Sartre 2018) and *A Sketch for the Emotions* (Sartre 2014). Howells identifies that Sartre differentiates between ‘sentiments’ and ‘emotions.’

Emotion differs from sentiment in so far as the latter involves a state of equilibrium when the feeling experienced is adapted to the reality to which it responds. Emotion on the other hand is not a rational response to a situation, it is a way of apprehending the world which aims to transform it (Howells 2009, 4).

With this interpretation we could observe Sartre’s view that the sentiments are prolonged adaptations and responses to emotions, that can offer harmonising resolutions to the apparently intransigent situations we find ourselves in.

The situations in which the sentiments could be called upon to adapt and reflect could be relatively manageable, or more overwhelming – as in love or sadness for another. Situations can also be larger than human life, such as the pandemic, or the Earth Crisis of climate change. The sensory development of the sentiments could then be seen perhaps as being akin to, if not an exact exchange for, an education of the emotions, in that an expression of the sentiments enables a continuity of thought and action, whereas when emotion becomes unmanageable ‘the path to action is blocked’ (Sartre 2014, 25).

A different view of the sentiments as adaptive, and transformative appears later in Sartre’s preface to Fanon’s *Wretched of the Earth* (1963). Sartre observes that readers of the book, who at the time were likely to be the white ‘liberal’, ‘humane’ middle classes, would feel ashamed in hearing about the atrocities being committed in Algeria in the name of French civilisation.

You, who are so liberal and so humane, who have such an exaggerated adoration of culture that it verges on affectation, you pretend to forget



that you own colonies and that in them men are massacred in your name...Have the courage to read this book, for in the first place it will make you ashamed, and shame, as Marx said, is a revolutionary sentiment. (Sartre in Fanon 1963, 14)

Here the reflective sentiment that responds to stirred emotions is identified as 'shame'. The readers moved to sadness and anger would, it was hoped, be encouraged to take up the cause of Algerian independence, and racial equality. Sartre refers to a letter written by Karl Marx to Arnold Ruge, in which Marx writes, 'Shame is a revolution in-itself... shame is a kind of anger turned in on-itself' (1843). Sartre's position on the sentiments has changed to view them not only as 'a state of equilibrium' for the emotions, but as potentially revolutionary affective forces.

This concept of the sentiments as being drivers for revolutionary forces is extended in Fanon's writings. Fanon argues that a non-critical immersion in creative and literary culture, and the belief in an 'exaggerated adoration of culture' as being an education of the sentiments in itself, are approaches that support colonising elites that need to be 'put to shame'. Fanon writes of the colonial roots of much of the Western cultural output that is presumed to be educating the sensibilities of all.

On the universal plane this affirmation, you may be sure, should on no account be taken to signify that we feel our selves affected by the creations of Western arts or techniques. For in a very concrete way Europe has stuffed her self inordinately with the gold and raw materials of the colonial countries. (1963, 102)

With this observation, philosophies that consider how the sensory immersion in arts and culture could positively adapt, draw out, and thereby educate the sentiments are cautioned to relate to what has happened behind the scenes. Voices that celebrate culture are entreated to think about, and to feel more about, how the world could also have been disadvantaged in the extraction of materials and resources for these works of culture; then to reflection on the hidden inequalities of work behind the scenes of what appears before the public, and in the cultural texts offered to students. There is a difference here however, from teaching by humiliation (NeSmith 2021, 87), a historical practice in which students

would be shamed into realising their shortfalls by a powerful authority: contemporary education needs to be teaching for compassion.

Why are the sentiments significant for education?

Recognising that sentiments exist, is in the first place, a start to beginning to practice an education with them – ‘to draw out’ potential and capacity in ways that support wellbeing. The sentiments could be significant for an education that gives value to interpretations of affective subjectivity, via arts of the self in self-challenge, truth to the self and self-care (Foucault 2005). Education gathers meaning also in its experiential, purposive directives for social integration, and participation, care for others, and creative invention in a field that contributes to self and society. We could observe that these are all forces for social transformation that have a root in an affective response to the needs of self, others – including other-than-humans, and the environment.

There are some who will struggle with the word ‘sentiments’ in the English language, possibly in connection with prevalent rationalising, Cartesian and positivist philosophies, since this term can become associated with the ineffectual, the frail, the faint-hearted. We are more accustomed now to reading of affect and emotion, to hearing about sentience and being. If the responses of students are described as sentimental, they may be linked to an introspective tendency for being caught in what Deleuze and Guattari (2013) would term ‘a refrain’ a habitual place one goes back to, whereas the term ‘affect’ is linked to natural forces, to energy and to an education for emotional overflow from the normative expectations (Gilbert and Matthews 2021). However there could be very productive aspects of the sentiments as ‘active refrains’ in learning, that I will discuss later in this chapter.

Then, to go back to the question – can we educate the sentiments? We could perhaps think about what would happen if we did not try to do this? What would happen if doctors failed to care for their patients as human beings, because they did not have the time and resources to do so? What would happen if everyone was expected to repress their emotions, to produce the guise of harmonious sentiments that do not ‘abase’ the consciousness, unlike the emotions that reach through our inability to control them? (Sartre

2014, 52) What if our emotions were constantly levelled to the point of being mere functional components of a machine, that might even be a war machine? There are such horrors of negated sentiment, persecution and environmental destruction happening in many places in the world; it would be a romantic idealism to say that these events are not happening. Perhaps as Beauvoir said, 'the most optimistic ethics have all begun by emphasising the element of failure in the condition of [being human]; without failure, no ethics' (Beauvoir 1948, 9). Therefore, philosophy goes to find an ethics in this 'element', because at times humanity fails to educate the sentiments.

Could education elicit the sentiments, as they organise emotional, affective responses, to change shape, to move out of the forces that act through humanity, to make mindful and embodied developments that are beneficial for self and others? With the assistance of philosophy in practice, as it can be applied in arts practice, or other learning processes, can education offer sustainability for teaching methods that encourage compassion? In responding to these questions educators can work with philosophies of care, such as Foucauldian 'care of the self' (Foucault 2005); also the multi-modal theoretical interpretations of Alfred North Whitehead (1968), as has Dennis Atkinson who responds to Whitehead's statement: 'Have a care, here is something that matters' (Atkinson 2018, 3). Mattering and sustainability in education could take form in ecologies in practice, that reassess the connection that emotional responses have to the relative truths found in experience. For instance, the Centre for Arts and Learning and Climate Museum UK have been working with posthumanist continental philosophies via Deleuze and Guattari (2013); 'ecosophies' influenced by Guattari (2008), also relate to climate science. In practice research we have explored arts methods as pedagogies of care and empowerment for young people, and also mature students, who may be experiencing eco-anxieties. This research finds that sensory, material, and aesthetic 'lines of flight' (Deleuze and Guattari 2013, 2), can offer routes out of frustration with the limitations of current social action for global reparations.

Returning to the view that emotions such as anger, sadness and fear are experiences of a contingency in the world that needs to change, perhaps an extreme injustice, critical pedagogies arguably have the potential to make a contribution to those transformations for

self and others (Matthews 2021b). Nevertheless intense emotions will continue to manifest themselves at certain times of life; sometimes subjectivity is caught in the moment of not being able to change such emotions. However educators might assemble experienced examples of how to manage the emotions, in outreach to other learners and educators, towards the expression of socially active and productive sentiments.

On the other hand, readers might observe that education can at times become a form of social construction that steers students towards particular emotive responses. One is taught to feel happiness and joy when one meets the criteria for an assignment, through various types of rewards, and through the doorways that open in response to what is perceived to be academic success. In many cases, the contrary happens when the requirements of formalised education are not met. Disappointment, anger, fear, frustration and deflation can be seen as the rightful sentiments of what is perceived to be an academic failure, to be turned in against the self, and not to be focused on changing intra-actions between self, others and environments. Students, and life-long learners outside formal education, may be expected to learn by negative experiences, in the same way that successes receive positive reinforcement. To feel shame in this sense is not to activate 'a revolutionary sentiment' as Sartre said with Fanon (1963), it is instead a reinforcement of existing conditioning social structures. In the regulatory structures of education, students and practitioners might be conditioned to have no feeling at all – and just get on with doing better in the next assignment – as an expected, automatic response, 'to a machine in which everyone is caught, those who exercise power just as much as those over whom it is exercised' (Foucault 1980, 156).

The lived experience of being caught in conditioning, machinic structures within education, and limited expectations for possible graduate opportunities can be particularly immobilising for underrepresented students, who may be in a global majority. Feeling might be seen as a luxury affordable only to the better resourced (Fanon 1963), who can afford to take risks with the established curricular hierarchies that favour, for example scientific, medical and legal fields of study over the arts and humanities. Cultural openings for developing sensibilities can be expensive. For instance, Art education in the UK is now seen as a non-essential subject in state education, when once it was widely recognised that a

socially aware, creative education is absolutely essential for wellbeing, for emotional self-expression, for self-generated learning and imaginative invention (Matthews 2019). I have to say that my sentiments about this are particularly steely, and I have gathered them in a resolve to explore an 'All For the Arts' approach to education, that emphasises the need for inclusive arts practice.

### Historicity and Healing Time

Observing how continental philosophy relates to cultural resourcing for the sentiments, I am compelled to think about how feeling and its expression have a temporal quality. Time may be seen as a healer, and passing infatuations are lamented: they seem to act through human beings as an immanent force of nature and biological imperative. Human beings worry about behavioural habits that become addictive and harmful, because they control the sentiments over and over again, with no moderation. In addition, practitioners and theorists could reflect back on the singularity of particular historical events, that send reverberations through time, as did Badiou (2007, 179). From the Big Bang to the pandemic of the early 2020s, events – locally, globally and cosmically situated in history, have manifested to the emotions as something for human subjectivity to contend with.

Sometimes events appear as a joyful life-force, sometimes a 'sad' blade of tragedy that some have survived (Spinoza 1988, 570). Therefore an education of the sentiments would seem to take time and practice, to reflect back on the 'events' of singular and extended historicities, that may have overwhelmed reflection as they appeared out of the blue. Such events have left physical, emotional and cognitive distress in generations of mind-body-environments.

Active, transformative sentiments take time to motivate human subjectivity, to heal struggle-worn patches of self, and to practice new patterns of existence that reach towards life-affirming ways of expressing emotion and making changes in the world. Acknowledging the gift to self and others of an extended education, philosophy can offer life-long learners ways of not just coming to terms with happenings, but ways of making new terms to redefine those happenings.

Sartre wrote in *The Age of Reason* (2001) about how passions became tempered by mistakes made, and the time taken to readjust to the outcomes of hasty actions. In the case of Mathieu Delarue – the man ‘of the street’, who is the main character in Sartre’s *Roads of Freedom* series, the age at which one could begin to take responsibility for life experiences would apparently be thirty-four. This appears quite an arbitrary age, yet it is an age when all compulsory education has been completed, and at which many people are mainly being educated by their life experiences (Matthews 2021). Practitioners could perhaps be encouraged then to find ways of educating the sentiments, instead of prioritising forms of rationalisation that exclude them.

Existentialism also reflected on what it would be like to take away the externally directed moral imperative, to have to make ethical decisions for oneself, as when a student comes to Sartre for advice on a choice between a sentiment for staying in France with his mother after his brother was killed in the Second World War, and a contradictory sentiment for joining the French Free Forces. In this instance of a difficult choice to make between sentiments, Sartre encourages independent thinking, for students to freely invent their own code of ethics, in the choices they make (Sartre 2007, Matthews 2021). Such investigations of sentiment, choice and responsibility could have relevance to a contemporary education that encourages critical thinking in relation to visceral feelings, for expression of sentiment. However, it needs to be recognised that many in education are currently looking to philosophies that reach for the hidden voices of women and people of colour, to avoid the prevalent perspective that a person who feels, and whose feeling needs to be heard, would need to be characterised through white masculinities, if they were not to be what Frantz Fanon called *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963). Fanon connected the meaningful more-than-human of the world, that acts upon human beings in many ways without our knowing, with the energies, spiritual, intellectual and physical presences of the global majority.

In the realm of thought, man [human beings] may claim to be the brain of the world; but in real life where every action affects spiritual and physical existence, the world is always the brain of mankind; for it is at this level that you will find the sum total of the powers and units of thought, and the dynamic forces of development and improvement; and it is there that energies are merged and the sum of man's [humanity's] intellectual values is finally added together (198).

This study of the sentiments could reflect on practices of mindfulness that also recommend repetition of positive grounding thoughts, connecting human subjectivity with its being-in-the-world, then steering the sentiments towards enabling more extensive learning capacities. Mindful practices are non-formal aspects of self-education that have some connections with continental philosophy, as in Guattari's *Three Ecologies* (2008), where a posthumanist perspective seeks to lift the subject out of the mechanisms of capitalist society into a community of wellbeing. Sustainable environmental practices are theorised for addressing the 'modes' of 'knowledge, culture, sensibility and sociability' in which the sentiments make themselves known (Guattari 2008, 33). As the subject experiences their input to new growth in the world, the mind-body can be at once consciously and unconsciously harmonised, towards more nurturing organising principles and more balancing ways of practicing with the sentiments.

A posthuman perspective reminds us that human beings are not the centre of the universe: 'the world is always the brain of mankind', as Fanon said acknowledging the dimensionalities of the Earth's lifeforces, before posthumanism emerged at the turn of the millennium to 'mark the decline of Eurocentrism as a historical event' (Braidotti 2013, 53). Posthumanist philosophy takes in more expanded concepts of subjectivity, and of sentience, to include the feelings of other-than-humans: of animals, plant-life, the very mineral matters of the world and space from which we came. Deleuze and Guattari built a poetics of geoartistry – the creativity of nature beyond the human, in the collective murmurations of birds: their 'lines of flight' are connected to even the greatest human elevations and leaps of thought and feeling (2, 2013).

Deleuzian approaches encourage connection with the roots of being and sensing, feeling through the earth's energies for sustenance in 'rhizomatic' lateral or 'transversal' processes (Deleuze and Guattari 2013, 10). These processes include evolving practice research methodologies, that make contact with an earthed materiality which has 'multiple entryways' (12), in active learning by making and doing. Further instances of rhizomatic learning happen in grass roots, politicised gatherings and subcultures, as well as in more mainstream educational settings.

Perhaps even amid emotional chaos, the grounding sensory practices of posthumanism, might begin to train the intellectual positioning of the sentiments, through patterns of action, thought and feeling. Patterns of recall and response act as rhythmic 'refrains' to return to, when happenings threaten to drive us to distraction: 'Rhythm is the milieu's answer to chaos' (364). The 'refrain', like a melody of solace, is an emotive and sensory pattern that accompanies us, potentially in a process of self-challenge: 'A child hums to summon the strength for the homework she has to hand in' (362). Rather than aiming to transcend, to reach beyond, Deleuze and Guattari (2013) encourage being in the 'milieu', in the middle of co-existent life forces. So perhaps here a philosophical education of the sentiments teaches moderation through affirmative connection to the sustainable patterns of humans and other beings in the world.

#### Travelling Sentience: Among Other-than-humans

Sometimes in response to a violent or disruptive, physical or verbal action, that stems from an inability to process emotions, the phrase 'their behaviour was worse than animals' locates the education of emotions and the sentiments as a factor of humanisation. Of course this can also be seen as an insult to animals! Simone de Beauvoir had a well expressed perspective on the unfeeling actions of men. She tasked herself with visiting abattoirs in America (1998) and wrote about her experiences.

In order to live, man consumes non-human lives, but he also feeds on the lives of other humans. It suddenly strikes me that the blades slicing the wounded meat, all this carnage of blood and steel, are there only to illuminate the awful meaning of the natural law to which we are all inured from birth – man is an animal that eats. (Beauvoir 1998, 370)

As in other ranging travels, Beauvoir took herself to places that educated, middle class women were not meant to be found in. She put her sentiments in predicaments that had to be negotiated with philosophy. Let us say that the niceties of feeling that are usually preserved for people of a certain class, with a certain level of education, were shaken up and relocated in this way. There are many who would become vegetarian in an instant, if forced to visit an abattoir. This is an example of an affective response that people are



protected from in their daily lives, as they reach towards the most exquisite stimuli for the senses, or the most beautifully presented rare meats/endangered animals.

Beauvoir wrote about the challenging effects of relocating physically from France to America, and from one time zone to another, and in a sense the education of the sentiments can be culturally altered by our resituation in different temporal and physical zones. Sometimes subjectivity needs to step out of the familiar time and space, the 'inured' comfort zones of home, away from the social presences that tell us what we are used to hearing, and emotionally 'wrenching contrasts' in the treatment of humans and other than humans that is made culturally justifiable (Beauvoir 1998, 231). When such behaviour is endemically justified, there might be no emotion felt at all in its perpetration. Education can therefore need to take up an uncomfortable position in bringing back compassionate emotion and feeling for others.

To elicit different responses, we might at first offer learning experiences of acquiring new sensibilities, as for example in experiencing a work of culture, or sharing a discussion of a topic. The further a person takes on a journey or pathway in learning - in schools, colleges or universities, or in public pedagogy and non-formal learning, the more they are expected to learn to moderate feeling when responding to different viewpoints and cultural perspectives. This experience of having 'an education' is wider than what is formally known as education. However degree programmes in higher education institutions (HEIs) often encourage students to argue from a position of expanded cultural ethics. An informed view might also take in the unfamiliar and acknowledge ambiguity (Beauvoir 2015), problem-posing multiple ways of responding to the same issue. In making 'educated' informed responses, the sentiments are externalised and communicated to others.

This externalisation of the sentiments could be seen from a different viewpoint, in recollection of childhood, as Beauvoir recalls.

All day long I felt like people's eyes were upon me; I liked and even loved the people around me, but when I went to bed at night I felt a sharp sense of relief at the idea of being able to live for at least a little while without being watched by others; then I could talk to myself, remember things, allow my emotions a free reign, and hearken to those tender inner

promptings that were stifled by the presence of grown-ups. (Beauvoir 2001, 73)

Perhaps sometimes the sentiments do not need educating, via an external, 'grown-up' perspective, and as in Beauvoir's recollections of childhood, are instead understood in listening to the quiet voice of 'inner promptings'? Additionally, at times adults find sentiments for others in relating to them as they were, before the social conditioning brutalised or ridiculed the emotions, instead of caring and educating.

Beauvoir theorised 'the ethics of ambiguity' (2015) as a way of admitting the debatable in ethics, and the futility of aiming towards a transparency in self-representation that cannot be realised. An ethos of ambiguity, that lifts presumptions of the sentiments being right, or wrongfully placed in education, can also enable affective responses that would be really difficult to address directly. Here this comparative study returns to the 'infinite nuances' of the sentiments, that Badiou located, for a multi-layered and interpretive approach to education.

Sometimes a young person in our care as educators may have such an entangled combination of affective responses, that they are not sure which emotions they are feeling. It would not benefit them to try and separate these emotions, to put them under a microscope, and try to make them transparent (Matthews 2019). Arts practice often works with ambiguity, in the complexity of sensory imagery it brings together, with the acknowledgement that imagery which elicits joy in some might bring about a conflicted reaction in others. In this sense, relating to Beauvoir's ethics of ambiguity (2015), an education of the sentiments could also connect with a Deleuzian approach: deterritorialised sentiments could escape the interrogation of the emotions, which are often psychologised phenomena (Deleuze and Guattari 2013, Guattari 2008), working across a many-layered assemblage of ambiguity - to be interpreted and reinterpreted, according to the contexts in which they occur.

With such an approach to the sentiments, philosophy can encourage us to welcome the unfamiliar, as Rancière (2010) notes to introduce strangeness, and invite our curiosity, disturbing the surfaces of the acceptable. For instance, an artist might introduce a really

challenging aesthetic, an abject or discordant image, a powerful statement, or an address that activates anger and dismay (Matthews 2019, 2021). In such cases the artist reveals 'a gap in the sensible' (Rancière 2010, 38), altering the ways in which we communicate via our senses, to provoke a dissensus that can potentially create seismic sensory shifts.

At this point we could also bring to the conversation the insurgent event, or unexpected occurrence – local or global, that can force a shift in positioning towards situational contingency. Alain Badiou's concept of the event (2007), that acts beyond either human sentiments or reason, throws a curved ball into all planning and preparation for educating the sentiments. Often things happen that are beyond human control, and we have to respond in the moment, instinctively or through drawing upon prior knowledges, to later feel something after the event. This again is where the sentiments can become nostalgic, for a time before that event – or alternatively *for* that event itself. Therefore to argue that feeling and expressing sentiments can be positive, enables further cultural value for reflective moments. Moments and sequences of historical awareness are continuing learning experiences – in that they can only have considered reflective meaning for anyone after the event. History as human genealogies, natural history, history of art, of philosophy and education are still connected to us in the shifting present, when revisiting historical practice of the sentiments (Foucault 2005, 2007b).

My argument in this chapter intends to make a good case for the relevance of discussing the sentiments in education. I have here brought to this collection a range of philosophical tools. So far I have offered significant ways that discursive processes can be viewed as helping to map the personal and emotional, in relation to the global and historical. I have moved among philosophers in this exploration, with the intention of encouraging further dialogue and more extended contemporary readings of continental philosophy. The connections made between the identifying concepts of theorists in discussion have drawn attention to ways of making contact with one-another, sometimes to rebound in contrast, and sometimes to gather in layers of meaningful comparison. Therefore philosophy of the sentiments accumulates what Lacan termed 'points de capiton' that is 'a kind of knot of meanings' (Lacan 2003, 345). These knotty significances take on a more temporal quality as

we begin to expand on how they bond as 'quilting points', bringing together signifiers for the sentiments as they have meaning for education (Evans 2006, 151).

The temporal qualities of experience, found when unpacking the meanings of the sentiments, need the infinite space of 'an education' to unfold into. An education of the sentiments could be seen as locating 'quilting points' that bond different layers of culture and experiences, bringing together a range of active elements and energies to be registered and recorded. Acknowledging the need to form bonding points, for travelling sentiences, and in recognition of the multiple layers of interpretation that form discursive interventions, I will now bring together the focal points introduced in this chapter.

## Conclusions

To counteract constructions of the learning subject that narrow self-expression, and prefigure how the sentiments can be activated in learning processes, an education of the sentiments would need to anticipate diverse affective responses and enable multiple points of accessibility (Deleuze and Guattari 2013, 12). Recognition that the sentiments exist at all enables pedagogical practices to start to define their actions and adaptability, for socially aware, creative education. Young people not yet empowered in society, and also adults in underrepresented groups in higher education could be offered more equal 'transversal' spaces (Deleuze and Guattari 2013, 10) where the sentiments may be raised as being of value for discussion.

Iterations of the sentiments in continental philosophy offer different values and definitions, forming energising concepts in existentialism, poststructuralism and posthumanism. Equipping expression of the sentiments with philosophical tools can enable multiple forms of agency, that move within and beyond centralising existential freedom of the subject to choose what they will learn, and how they will find self-expression in that learning, to activate possibilities (Sartre 2018, 2007, 2001). Then the argumentation turns to strategic technologies of self, such as self-care, that form

compassion for self and a supportive or challenging interrelation with others (Foucault 2005).

This chapter also explored how 'machinic assemblages' (Deleuze and Guattari 2013) form human and other-than-human 'drifts', as paradigm shifts in which mind-body-environment learning interactions can be expressed. Drifting and shifting positioning of the sentiments can bring about 'absolute deterritorialisation' (64) for travelling sentiences. Deleuzian 'lines of flight' (2) offer routes out of frustration, as for example when subjectivities become exasperated with limited social action for global reparations in the Anthropocene. Rhizomatic, textural and material compassionate pedagogies include reflection on the sentiments in their evolving methodologies.

The contrast between Spinozan joy (Spinoza 1988, Rorty 2010) as the transformative emotion, and existentialist thinking that views anger, shame and sadness as revolutionary emotions that contend with history and the present, creates an important place for different viewpoints (Fanon 1963, Sartre 2014). An education of the sentiments might therefore choose which sentiment is 'adapted to the reality to which it responds' (Howells 2009, 4) and tempered in an infinity of possible nuanced expressions (Badiou 2007).

It was also observed, via Rancière (1991, 2010) that education of the sentiments occurs in noticing disruptions in normative patterns as a 'gap in the sensible' (Rancière 2010, 38), seeking heterogeneity and dissensus, welcoming the unfamiliar, and introducing strangeness (2010, 142).

To compare these elements of Rancière's thinking with Beauvoir's views (2015), human subjectivity needs to work with the disruption of the sensible, by embracing humanity's 'fundamental ambiguity' (Beauvoir 2015, 8) to learn about what is really happening in our sensibilities, and the always at least partial unknowing of existence. Via Beauvoir, I also have discussed how sentiments, aesthetics and cultural appreciation form what I

term *travelling sentience*. As people move out of their immediate localities, or national zones of familiarity, they develop migratory identities and subjectivities (Beauvoir 1998). Beauvoir's philosophy brings back feeling for others, and this can assist learning and teaching for compassion.

Beauvoir also envisaged breathing spaces for the sentiments, in her autobiographical writing (2001, 73). The articulated, reflective sentiments may be seen to fall behind the expressive force of the emotions, yet the sentiments may also be left to their own unfolding, without external illumination.

My argument has highlighted a need for pedagogies of care (Foucault 2005, Atkinson 2018) to assist an education of the sentiments that changes intra-actions between self, others and environment. Pedagogies of care take time to develop, as feeling, trust and expression have a temporal quality. The healing, but also historically occluding qualities of time, need to find ways of prioritising the sentiments instead of minimising them, towards making creative, compassionate learning communities.

Then again, I have also noted some cautionary points about trying to educate the sentiments via Fanon (1963), in that educators and self-educators need to consider the cultural, socio-economic and ethical basis of our intentions, when enabling discursive recognition of our adapting emotions. I recommend comparative readings of post-continental voices that decentralise European perspectives, and combine scientific with affective approaches to learning, for multi-modal philosophies of practice (Erkan 2020, James 2019, Laruelle 2016, Stengers and Muecke 2017, Stiegler 2020).

When there is talk of an object or an experience having 'sentimental value', it is acknowledged that the prevalent material judgements about worth and economic value are not sufficient to identify the full meaning of such an object, souvenir – or 'cool memory' (Baudrillard 1990). Yet we cannot hoard sentimentality: our minds and bodies need space to breathe, to make room for new experiences. Sometimes the sentiments change without even our conscious reflection, unwatched by self or others (Beauvoir 2001). However in an

experience of learning and teaching, there might also be a treasured phrase, or sensory imagery, from a peer or a teacher, an artist or a philosopher, that acts as a compassionate 'refrain' (Deleuze and Guattari 2013) to sustain us through disheartening experiences. This compassionate refrain could accompany learning through many different events, acting as a medium for bringing emotion into 'the fold' (Deleuze 2006), and encouraging the confidence to express sentiments, that might otherwise have been enveloped in insouciance.

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